

LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)

DATE: 20 JANUARY 2022

**LEAD OFFICER: ALISON HOUGHTON, SENIOR TRANSPORT OFFICER,
STRATEGIC TRANSPORT GROUP**

**SUBJECT: BUS STOP CLEARWAYS IN WESTCOTT, LEATHERHEAD
AND FETCHAM**

**DIVISION: DORKING HILLS
LEATHERHEAD AND FETCHAM EAST
BOOKHAM AND FETCHAM WEST**

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Buses are unable to access bus stops in certain areas identified in Westcott, Leatherhead and Fetcham due to parked vehicles. To ensure good accessibility onto/off buses, and to ensure that the bus driver has good visibility of waiting passengers, it is recommended that where there are existing yellow bus stop cages lined on the road these are formalised by providing clearway plates, or that where there is no yellow bus stop cage then a bus stop clearway is installed. This will enable the traffic regulation to be enforced.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to agree that:

- (i) in Dorking Hills division bus stop clearways are formalised at the following stops: a) at both Westcott House bus stops and b) at both Parsonage Lane bus stops, on Guildford Road, Westcott with bus stop clearways to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- (ii) in Leatherhead and Fetcham East division bus stop clearways are formalised at the following stops: a) at both All Saints Church bus stops, b) at Park Rise bus stop (Stop N) on Kingston Road, Leatherhead, c) at North Street bus stop (Stop S) on North Street, Leatherhead, d) at Orchard Close bus stop, Cobham Road, Fetcham (towards Leatherhead) with bus stop clearways to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- (iii) in Leatherhead and Fetcham East division, bus stop clearways are introduced at the Bridge Street, Leatherhead bus stops (Stop P and Stop Q) with bus stop clearways of 23 metres in length, to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and that affected frontages are informed of the proposals and given time to feedback before any implementation
- (iv) in Bookham and Fetcham West division a bus stop clearway is formalised at Orchard Close bus stop, Cobham Road, Fetcham (towards Bookham) with the bus stop clearway to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- (v) any objections from affected frontages will be addressed by delegated authority by the Strategic Transport Group Manager, in consultation with

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the relevant Surrey County Councillor and the Chair of the Mole Valley Local Committee.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Mole Valley Local Committee agree to the formalising or installation of bus stop clearways operating for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. This is to ensure that buses servicing these bus stops can provide passengers with step-free access at all times and ensure that there is good visibility for the bus driver to see waiting passengers as well as aiding journey time reliability.

These measures aim to support the use of public transport and to make the public transport offer more attractive by making it more accessible and reliable.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Since January 2016, all full-size single deck buses have been made fully accessible, as per the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR). This makes it easier for passengers with mobility issues to board and alight buses. Non-compliance with PSVAR is a criminal offence, contrary to Section 40(3) of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- 1.2 In July 2018, the Department for Transport (DfT) subsequently released 'The Inclusive Transport Strategy: achieving equal access for disabled people', which aims to create an inclusive transport network for all by 2030 and contribute to enabling an additional one million disabled people into work by 2027. Therefore, there is a requirement for public transport infrastructure, including bus stops, to be accessible to all.
- 1.3 Surrey County Council's Greener Futures Programme has followed the declaration of a Climate Emergency in Surrey in 2019, with improvements to sustainable transport modes such as public transport, walking and cycling being part of the resultant Climate Change Strategy.
- 1.4 The Department of Transport's "Bus Back Better" National Bus Strategy was published in March 2021. It sets out the vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers across England and to improve equality of opportunity, particular for older and disabled people.
- 1.5 It is important that buses can access stops to provide step-free access for all passengers ensuring that they are able to safely board and alight, especially those with mobility issues, wheelchair users, with child buggies, or those using shopping trolleys. Buses can be prevented from pulling in parallel to the kerb where there is unrestricted parking, meaning that passengers may have to step into the road to access the bus, and it is also difficult to deploy bus ramping or kneeling equipment safely.
- 1.6 Installing a bus stop clearway with a marked bus cage, and making it enforceable, prevents vehicles parking on the carriageway at bus stops and allow buses to safely serve these stops.
- 1.7 Bus stop clearways enable Mole Valley District Council enforcement officers to issue penalty charge notices on offending vehicles thereby discouraging inconsiderate parking.

- 1.8 Reliability of buses is improved when the vehicles are able to approach, stop and depart from bus stops without hindrance, enabling services to maintain scheduled timetables and encourage the usage of sustainable transport.
- 1.9 The bus routes, which serve the stops detailed in the recommendations above, operate every day, generally from the early morning and into the late evening, meaning that the most appropriate clearway control is a 24hr continuous prohibition of stopping, loading, or parking, by all vehicles other than local bus services. A shorter period of control would increase the risk of obstructive parking occurring during the late evening and early morning periods; however, the bus services do require unhindered access to/from the bus stops throughout the entirety of their operating schedules.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 A number of bus stops in the district have been identified where there are vehicles parked, or stationary, in the near vicinity of the stops, meaning that the bus drivers are not able to pull in their vehicles parallel to the kerb at the stop to allow passengers to safely board/alight from the bus.
- 2.2 The individual clearway detail for each bus stop is given in the annex.
- 2.3 Many of the bus stops listed already have yellow bus stop cages lined on the road but have no accompanying clearway plate at the bus stop meaning that the bus stop clearways are not enforceable. By formalising the bus stop clearway with the provision of the appropriate timing plate the clearway can be enforced.
- 2.4 The two bus stops on Bridge Street, Leatherhead (stop P & stop Q) do not currently have yellow bus stop cages lined on the road. The provision of these bus stop cages together with a clearway time plate on the bus stop pole will ensure that the near vicinity of the bus stop should be kept clear of parked or stationary vehicles which can impede the bus pulling in parallel to the kerb and providing good accessibility onto/off the bus for passengers. Each bus stop cage will be 23 metres in length which is in line with our current standards to ensure that the bus stop area is kept clear. Any frontages affected by the introduction of these bus stop clearways will be informed of the proposals and be given an opportunity to comment before any implementation.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Doing nothing is an option but based upon the reasoning expressed above as to why a clearway is important, this is not a suitable option. The option of doing nothing does not support the provision of accessible public transport, the agendas of the National Bus Strategy and the Greener Futures Programme or Surrey's Climate Change Strategy.
- 3.2 The preferred option would be to formalise and introduce bus stop clearways as appropriate, to be in operation twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to provide good access onto/off buses for passengers. There are other nearby opportunities for local parking that maybe displaced by the introduction of clearways.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Local bus operators have raised concerns regarding the issue of parked vehicles preventing the buses from safely pulling in parallel to the kerb at bus stops and also delaying the bus service due to buses having to negotiate around vehicles.
- 4.2 If approval for introduction of any new clearways is granted, any affected frontages and properties neighbouring the stop will be informed of the proposals. This will give an opportunity for feedback and comments on the proposed changes to be provided before a final decision is made and the clearway works are progressed and enforced.
- 4.3 Surrey County Council, as the Highway Authority, has powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions 2016 to create bus stop clearways. A bus stop clearway is a parking restriction at a bus stop that can be enforced by the District Council's Civil Enforcement Officers as they would enforce waiting restrictions. Bus stop clearways are more restrictive than waiting restrictions because the clearway also prohibits stopping and loading/unloading over the length of the bus stop.
- 4.4 Unlike waiting restrictions there is no mandatory statutory consultation process for a highway authority to implement a bus stop clearway.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The cost of the works will be less than £1,000. If the clearways are approved a funding source will be identified before any works are ordered.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 No Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed, but the changes made to this bus stop in providing step-free access to buses serving this stop are to improve accessibility for all bus users, including those with disabilities and mobility issues. It is not envisaged that any protected characteristics will be disbenefitted by the proposals.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 In terms of those who will be impacted by this decision, all bus passengers using these bus stops will be positively impacted by ensuring step-free access and increased reliability of bus services
- 7.2 There may be a very small number of individuals who will be negatively impacted by the formalising of existing bus stop clearways and introduction of new bus stop clearways. However, there are a number of opportunities for unrestricted parking in the nearby locality.
- 7.3 Providing good accessibility onto and off buses and aiding improved journey time reliability will encourage the use of sustainable transport means by passengers and enable them to have access to the local amenities.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Making local bus services more accessible will encourage wider use of the bus network as a sustainable mode of transport. Reduced car use will contribute towards reduced carbon emissions and overall environmental benefits.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	The proposed measures should encourage the use of public transport which can contribute towards a more sustainable lifestyle with increased walking to/from bus services. Reduced carbon emissions and environmental benefits should have a positive impact on public health.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 It is recommended that approval be given for the formalising of the existing bus stop clearways or introduction of new bus stop clearways as detailed in the annex and in the recommendations section of this report.
- 9.2 The proposals are to ensure that buses servicing these bus stops are able to provide passengers with step-free access at all times of operation and improve accessibility and ease of use, by preventing private vehicles from parking at the stops, as well as to improve the reliability of the bus service. This is also the most cost-effective option, whilst trying to mitigate any negative impact on private vehicle owners.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 If approval is obtained to install new bus stop clearways at the bus stops on Bridge Street, Leatherhead then local residents of affected frontages will be informed and provided with an opportunity to comment. Any feedback will be considered before any final decision is made to amend the bus stop. Once a quote has been agreed with the lining contractor to complete the bus cage marking, this job will be added to their programme of works and once complete then a clearway plate will be erected at each bus stop.
- 10.2 If approval is obtained to formalise the existing bus stop clearways detailed in the annex and in the recommendations section of this report then appropriate clearway plates will be erected at each bus stop.
- 10.3 Mole Valley Parking Team will be made aware of the clearways to make them enforceable.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

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Hazel Watson, Surrey County Councillor for Dorking Hills
Tim Hall, Surrey County Councillor for Leatherhead and Fetcham East
Clare Curran, Surrey County Councillor for Bookham and Fetcham West
Metrobus
Stagecoach
London Buses
Falcon Coaches
Compass Travel

Annexes:

Annex 1 - Photos of bus stops.
